

Appln No. 10/760248
Amdt. Dated November 21, 2006
Response to Office Action of September 7, 2006

3

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Examiner's further Office Action of September 7, 2006 issued with respect to the present RCE application, the Applicant respectfully submits the accompanying Amendment to the claims and the below Remarks.

Regarding Amendment

In the Amendment:

independent claims 1 and 4 are further amended to explicitly recite that the printing surface of the printhead is uncovered, and therefore not covered by the claimed shield. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, at page 7, lines 5-18 and page 25, lines 9-15 and in Figs. 5 and 9 of the present application; and

dependent claims 2 and 3 are unchanged.

It is respectfully submitted that the above amendments do not add new matter to the present application.

Regarding 35 USC 103(a) Rejections

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of amended independent claims 1 and 4, and dependent claims 2 and 3, is not taught or suggested by previously cited Silverbrook et al., Silverbrook and Moore either taken alone or in combination with one another, for at least the following reasons.

In the present Office Action, the Examiner contends that with respect to the shield plate disclosed by Silverbrook et al. "if the paper is in contact with the shield, then it is before the paper leaves the shield".

However, pending (and amended) independent claims 1 and 4 clearly recite that the shield contacts the paper before the paper leaves the shield so as to pass the printing surface. Such an arrangement is not disclosed by Silverbrook et al. (or Moore and Silverbrook) because when the paper is contacting the shield plate it is also passing the printing surface of the printhead segments 4 (see col. 5, lines 2-67 and Fig. 1 of Silverbrook et al.).

Having said this, the Applicant has further amended independent claims 1 and 4 to make it abundantly clear that the claimed shield does not cover the printing surface as clearly illustrated in Figs. 5 and 9 of the present application, and is therefore distinguished from the shield plate of Silverbrook et al. and the nozzle guard of Silverbrook which both cover the respective printing surfaces.

Further, as previously discussed by the Applicant in the prosecution of the present application, there is no motivation for one of ordinary skill in the art from the disclosures of Silverbrook et al., Moore and Silverbrook to modify the disclosed shield plate/nozzle guard arrangement because Silverbrook et al. and Silverbrook are directed to correctly aligning passages in the shield plate/nozzle guard with the nozzles.

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4

It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's rejections have been traversed. Accordingly, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Very respectfully,

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